

APPENDIX TO TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 4181 OF DR. VIRGINIA KROLCZYK

Duties of a Counselor

According to the Michigan Department of Education, counselor duties and responsibilities, which has not been updated since 2008 (9 years ago), the function of the school counselor is: [Advising, placement, planning, counseling, coordinating, instructing, referring, and programing.](#)

However, what school a counselor actually does, especially at the high school level, is:

Scheduling, college guidance, post-secondary guidance, financial aid, scholarships, send transcripts to colleges, enroll new students, interpret transcripts, personal curriculums, explain flex opportunities, early college programs, dual enrollment, AP advising, credit recovery, summer school, 21f online, AP coordinators, PSAT coordinators, SAT coordinators, State Testing coordinators, write letters of recommendations (which colleges weigh heavily on), assist with educational development plans, write 504-plans (which have increased exponentially due to more anxiety disorder diagnosis), assist with homebound services, manage school refusal, refer to alternative learning, evaluate credits for graduation, aid students with testing out, work with English Learners, Special Education students, and ADHD students, manage conflict resolution, handle harassment issues, bullying issues, help students abusing substances, have anger issues, need grief counseling, have self-esteem issues, anxiety, depression, or are suicidal, experiencing gender dysphoria, and still respond to parent phone calls and emails.

The function of the school counselor has changed significantly since 2008 when the MDE stated "The only way to ensure that all high school students graduate ready to succeed in college and careers is to require the same high-quality college-preparatory curriculum for ALL students" and "To be successful in today's economy, ALL students will need education and training beyond the high school diploma."

Achieving these goals has become challenging. In 1997, the graduation requirements were:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)	4 credits
MATH	2 credits
SOCIAL STUDIES	4 credits
SCIENCE	2 credits
Health	½ credit
Visual Performing Applied Arts	1 credit

For a total of **13.5 core credits** and **20.5 to graduate**, most schools had open campuses for lunch, and students were allowed to graduate early.

Compared to current graduation requirements:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) 4 Credits

MATH - 4 credits

[Geometry/Algebra 1/Algebra II/senior math]

SOCIAL STUDIES 3 credits

[World history, U.S. History, government, economics]

SCIENCE 3 credits

[biology, chemistry or physics, science elective]

Health- ½ credit

PE- ½ credit

Visual Performing Applied Arts 1 credit

World Language 2 credit

For a total of **18 core credits** and **22 to graduate**, most schools are closed campuses, and at most schools students are not permitted to graduate early. This doesn't even include the Ethics requirement projected for 2018.

With these 18 core credits, students can apply for a PC, Flex, Department Approved CTE, Testing Out, 21f, Dual Enrollment, Stem Program, or Early College Programs-all of which involve a counselors guidance and an abundance of paperwork for the counselor to fill out.

Essentially, fewer counselors exist in the school system and duties and responsibilities have drastically increased.